

Message Text

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PAGE 01 HONG K 07389 120457Z
ACTION EA-12

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 CIAE-00 INR-10 NSAE-00 PA-01 ICA-11
SP-02 CG-00 DOTE-00 FMC-01 SCS-06 EB-08 CA-01
PM-05 MCT-01 /059 W
-----029597 120513Z /11

R 120410Z JUN 78
FM AMCONSUL HONG KONG
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 816
AMEMBASSY BANGKOK
INFO AMEMBASSY MANILA
AMEMBASSY SINGAPORE
DIA WASHDC
CINCPAC HONOLULU HAWAII

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MANILA AND SINGAPORE PASS USCG MMD

E.O. 11652: N/A
TAGS: CGEN, EWWT, TH
SUBJECT: APPARENT ATTEMPTED BOARDING OF US VESSEL

REF: A. BANGKOK 16445, B. HONG KONG 7330

1. CONOFF ATTENDED VESSEL AFTERNOON JUNE 11 AND SPOKE WITH
MASTER JAMES E. SHAW, AND A.B. HENRY A. PRUSS. MASTER HAD
NOT MADE ENTRY IN SHIP'S LOG, BUT HAD PREPARED STATEMENT FOR
CAPTAIN GEORGE H. WHITAKER, SEA-LAND, HONG KONG, AS FOLLOWS:
"ON JUNE 5, 1978 AT 1900 WHILE PROCEEDING UPRIVER TO BANGKOK,
I NOTICED SEVERAL SMALL BOATS APPROACHING OUR VESSEL FROM
DEAD ASTERN AT A RAPID RATE. AFTE THE BOATS DISAPPEARED
UNDER THE STERN AND DID NOT REAPPEAR ON EITHER SIDE OF
OUR VESSEL, I CALLED THE STERN WATCH, WHOM I HAD POSTED UPON
ENTERING THE RIVER. WHEN HE ANSWERED THE PHONE, HE
STATED THAT A BOAT HAD APPROACHED FROM THE STERN AND
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HAD HOOKED A LINE ABOARD. HE THEN GRABBED THE LINE
ANDPULLED IT ONBOARD. THE LOOKOUT ON THE STERN
THEN STATED THAT HE THOUGHT HE HEARD SMALL ARMS FIRE
FROM ONE OF THE BOATS. I HAD THE PILOT CALL THE
HARBOR POLICE WHO ARRIVED A SHORT TIME LATER AND PATROLLED
THE RIVER UNTIL WE DOCKED."

2. CONOFF SPOKE WITH PRUSS WHO AGREED TO GIVE STATEMENT AS FOLLOWS: QUOTE I WAS ON SECURITY WATCH ON THE PONCE TO WATCH FOR BOARDERS. APPROXIMATELY 15 TO 20 MINUTES AFTER THE CUSTOMS AND IMMIGRATION CAME ALONGSIDE AND LEFT, A SMALL BOAT CAME ALONGSIDE AND ON A LONG POLE PUT A GRAPPLING HOOK ON OVER OUR STBD QUARTER. AS A SECURITY WATCH I TOOK ACTION - I THREW A SPINNER AND HIT SAID BOAT ON THE PORT BOW AND TOOK THEIR TOW LINE BY HAND AND THEN I TOOK A TURN AND WANTED TO KEEP BOAT ALONGSIDE. THEY TURNED LOOSE OF THEIR TOW LINE AND LEFT. APPROXIMATELY 10 TO 15 MINUTES A BOAT PASSED OUR STERN AND I HEARD A LIGHT SOUND, TO ME IT SOUNDED LIKE A LIGHT CAL. POSSIBLY A .32 CAL OR .22 ALTHOUGH NOTHING HIT THE SHIP. THE RANGE WAS OVE 100 YDS. APPROX. LATER A BOAT WAS FOLLOWING AND THEN DISAPPEARED.

3. THE MATTER WAS DISCUSSED WITH THE NEW MASTER, CAPTAIN THOMAS H. TAYLOR, WHO STATED HE INTENDS TO POST 2 MEN ON WATCH ASTERN UPON ENTERING RIVER EN ROUTE TO BANGKOK AND TO SEE THAT ALL ARMS SHIPMENTS ARE STOWED BELOW DECK. AS FOR COAST GUARD NOTICE TO MARINERS, THIS WOULD SEEM ADVISABLE, GIVEN THE INSURGENCY IN THE COUNTRY. EMBASSY BANGKOK MAY ALSO WISH SUGGEST TO JUSMAAG THAT THAIS PROVIDE NAVAL ESCORT TO VESSELS CARRYING ARMS SHIPMENTS FROM POINT OF ENTRY THAI WATERS. SHOESMITH
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